

REMARKS

The undersigned attorney wishes to thank the Examiner for holding a personal interview on August 9, 2006, to discuss the present Office Action, the applied references, and the pending claims. Applicants respectfully request that this paper constitute the applicants' Interview Summary. The following remarks summarize the results of the interview, and they also reflect the agreements reached between the undersigned attorney and the Examiner during the interview. If the Examiner notices any deficiencies with this paper in this regard, she is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney to correct such deficiencies.

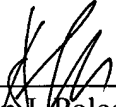
Claims 1-38 were pending in this application when the present Office Action was mailed (June 2, 2006). Claims 1, 13, and 26 have been amended to clarify certain aspects of these claims. Accordingly, claims 1-38 remain pending. In the Office Action mailed June 2, 2006, all of the pending claims were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,368,896 to Farnworth et al. ("Farnworth") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,560,122 to Weber ("Weber").

As set forth in the Examiner's Interview Summary dated August 9, 2006, amended claims 1, 13, and 26 overcome the rejection of record because, among other reasons, the protective material is applied to the backside of the workpiece before separating the dies. Accordingly, the Section 102 rejection of these claims, as well as the claims depending therefrom, should be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, the pending claims comply with 35 U.S.C. § 112 and are patentable over the applied art. The applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the application and a mailing of a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner has any questions or believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is encouraged to call the undersigned at (206) 359-3982.

Respectfully submitted,
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Date: 8/24/06



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